

GLINT

A collection of writing, photographs, and scans—including early development work, influences, annotated script, pages, research, behind-the-scenes documentation, chronological film stills, & interviews behind the lens of the short film. This book is a glimpse into the world of *Glint*.

"Once it starts...."



"it's Deafening."

A FILM BY **SAYNA FARDARAGHI**

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GLINT

Months before my university graduation I remember sitting in a park in London, near sunset. I had a stunning view in front of me, dogs and their owners running in a meadow, wild bunnies, birds, everything you can imagine. A warm hug of nature was surrounding me, yet I was in full tunnel vision sobbing to my mum on the phone that maybe, just maybe, of all the routes I could've picked in my life, film may have been the worst one and that I was headed straight towards disaster. Graduating with possibly no career in what I love, and no way to get my foot in the industry I dreamt of being in.

After calming down (thanks mom), I realized how insanely in my head I was, and how the head full of fear in adulthood had led me to an unexpected spiral. I also realised that it was now night, time had passed, folks had gone home, things continued to move on with or without me. This was where I understood how isolating and terrifying growing up can be, and despite loads of people my age feeling the same way, there has been no media representing this. I knew that I needed to make something that reflected that, after all - my line of work has always sparked from my deepest emotions & experiences.

Im eternally grateful for all those who helped turn this spark into a fire, my writer & my rock Julian Stoller who brought life to my ideas and transformed this film in ways I couldn't ever imagine, my DOP Jonny Flint who trusted my vision & always went above and beyond, my producer Robiul Khayer who found the balance between my dreams and reality, and of course, my actors Kate Lindsay, Clare McNamara & Coco Baudelle who in which none of this film would've been possible without.

Sayna Fardaraghi



On a warm Sunday spring morning in London, GLINT director Sayna Fardaraghi sat down with writer and film programmer Lilia Pavin-Franks to chat about the film's complex production history, metatextual connections between art and life, and forging a visual identity.

LPF: Sayna, I'm so excited to discuss this film with you. When we first met, you didn't have too many films under your belt, but you've since gone on to make such big moves in this industry in just a few years and it's so inspiring to see! I want to start at the beginning here and chat a bit about the film's conception. Julian Stoller wrote the script for GLINT – how did this collaboration come about and how did you work together to bring the story to life?

SF: So I had been looking for a writer for a while, because I just don't trust my writing skills...

LPF: What?!

SF: I know! Obviously I've written everything else that I've made, but for [a film] so dialogue heavy, I wanted to make sure I had someone who knew what they were doing. I also wanted someone who could influence some of the themes [of the project], so I found Julian and he was literally perfect. He sent me this story he wrote which was very strange but really caught my attention. Essentially, it's about a girl in a diner who keeps eating and eating, until she eventually morphs into a snake and engulfs everyone – waitress, chef, and all. It was crazy, but I loved it!

LPF: That does sound crazy, but now I want to read it too! So this was unrelated to the script, just something he'd written before?

SF: Yeah, so he sent it to me to see if we were a match and I was like "Okay, yes!" It's been a dream collaboration

ever since. It's good to work with someone who is also very interested in the visual motifs that can influence a film's language. I had very specific ideas of what I wanted, like a ring of fire, a bird, etc – things that linked to the theme of growing up. So, together, we started developing these elements really wonderfully. Our initial meeting was like "Okay, we want to talk about other versions of ourselves that could exist. We want to talk about clones. We want to portray the fear of growing up." What was nice about developing those ideas at that time was that we were both on the actual cusp of adulthood, so our real fears really tapped into the script.

LPF: So it sounds like the nucleus of the film was quite a collaborative process...

SF: Definitely. I think the script just started to develop and take shape based on our lives. For Julian, the characters are influenced by his life, and, for me, the arcs and the fears referenced from mine – he's literally my other creative half.

LPF: The film's ideas about time, life, and existence being cyclical but also infinite has an interesting connection to your experience of actually making this film and the difficulties you faced in production. Can you talk about that a little bit more?

SF: For sure, the film went through a lot of cycles and changes due to issues such as loss of funds, covid, location access, etc. The original version was much more experimental and based in nature, whereas this is now more confined and utilises a similar means of storytelling through the vessel of a home. And even though it's a different setting visually and storyline-wise, it feels just as special and compliments the themes we're trying to explore really beautifully. It's like an alternate version of what we originally set out to do, but equally as lovely.



LPF: I guess your own reality became obscured through these difficulties, having to not only repeat but also rewrite the past in a way. What did that teach you about the ways in which art and life are inextricably linked?

SF: Weirdly, the production itself did connect to the themes of the film. Like Helena's future, there are multiple paths you can take, but you have to trust the process and believe it's going to be fine whichever way you go. In the thick of making the film, I remember thinking multiple times "Oh my god, I've failed. I've failed again." But look, here we are, having this conversation, and it's all okay! Even if things turned out a little different to what I first imagined.

LPF: Yeah, you could definitely take what you've just said and apply it to life at large. That change that you mention, talk to me about that and how it relates to the setting of the house. That's a major part of the film, but I know you had some difficulties with filming there and that was a huge part of why this film took longer than expected to complete.

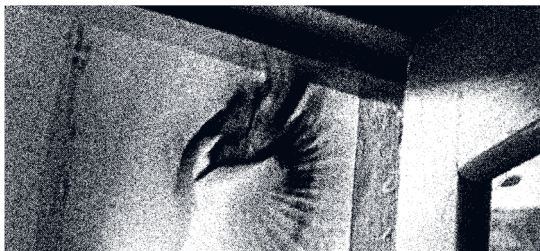
SF: At the beginning, the house wasn't an entity of its own. The story was more tied to Helena's internal fears of leaving the nest, and how, despite that, the outdoors would always creep in. But then, in the edit we noticed that the house is a really grounding force for her. Helena doesn't want to leave her home because, well, why would she? It's her comfort zone. And what was interesting was that we as the crew actually found that same level of comfort in the filming space that we had. Fast forward to us wanting to go back to the house and do some pick-ups there, only to find that it had been sold in the market. It showed how things can go away just like that, and how you need to be prepared to leave a nest. So quite literally we had to find a new sense of home, physically and psychologically.

LPF: So the fact that your set was essentially ripped away from you had a real impact on what should have been some simple supplementary shooting.

SF: Yeah. Due to Covid, the owners couldn't afford the

house anymore, so they sold it and moved up North. We didn't know about that, so it was a shock and meant that the pick-ups that we wanted, we couldn't get. And the footage we had didn't make sense without them. So most of the indoor shots were made redundant. It was very painful, having everything stripped away from you. All that hard work. I had to take a break from everything to calm down and figure things out. I remember thinking, "No I'm not going to let this kill me off." I started looking for sets again and found the perfect place in London. We shot in October 2023, and now, here we are.

LPF: It does feel serendipitous in a way, obviously when you put the negativity and stress aside. That emotional connection that you have with a childhood home, and dealing with the turmoil of leaving that space for whatever reason, but coming out on the other side and reflecting on how the experience has benefitted you and helped you grow as a person – it all feels mirrored in your experience of making this film. Time has passed and now you can reflect. So I guess you can relate this theme of being on the precipice of adulthood in the film to you being on the precipice of your own career when you were making it.



SF: Oh 100%. It weirdly gave me a second chance to do things better, now being much wiser. Weirdly, being forced to scout a new location for the interiors led us to rooms that were much better for blocking. Guess it was a silver lining of sorts – you can try and guess where we cut from old to new house in the edit, ha!

LPF: Life does have a way of working itself out, and often for the better. Did that sense of artistic vulnerability and challenge help you better connect with the protagonist of GLINT? How did it influence your direction?

SF: For sure. I mean the main character is literally afraid of encountering anything that gives her the uncomfortable feeling of growth. But life is about the ups and downs, otherwise it's just boring. I had to encounter that to grow as a filmmaker, otherwise I don't know where I'd be now. I've become much stronger, and crazy attentive to details because of these encounters. I can tell you that – the number of times I've ensured floors, walls and doors match between old and new footage for this is crazy (laughs).

LPF: Where did your inspirations lie for the overall visual language and tone of GLINT?

SF: As always, I dug deep into photobooks. The main inspiration was the work of Justine Kurland, specifically 'Girl Pictures'. I'd carry her photobook to every HOD meeting I had in to really immerse everyone in the world I wanted to create for the film. It's so feminine, yet has a dark side to it. Alongside that, the work of Zoe Ghertner, Yorgos Lanthimos and Kristoffer Borgli were very inspirational. Yorgos and Kristoffer were really pivotal to the style of filmmaking I wanted to approach, as I wanted to find fresh ways of making an audience feel uneasy. Their films 'Nimic' & 'Softcore' were big references.

LPF: How did you work with your DOP Jonny Flint to take these inspirations and use them to create GLINT's visual language?

SF: We shared a lot of moodboards as well as specific clips of films that had palettes and shooting styles that we felt were right. I remember sending him tons of photographers I adore. I think he actually has his own copy of Justine Kurland's 'Girl Pictures' now too! (laughs). It's really special to have a DOP that not only understands your references, but also gets where you're coming from. We were both living in the same world we conjured up for this film, and so we both mourned the same losses where funding lacked the ability to create the scenes. R.I.P to our ring of fire.

LPF: Despite its challenges, do you ultimately view the making of this film as somewhat cathartic, an inspiring labour of love that matured you as a filmmaker?

SF: Definitely. It had its highs and lows for sure, but this genuinely felt like actual film school for me. I never had the privilege of experiencing the traditional teachings of making a film. As a matter of fact, before this project I had never directed a spoken word narrative at all! So this was a really high risk training ground for me, but it has strengthened me in ways I couldn't have ever imagined. This film for sure has shaped me to be a better director.

It's important to understand that whenever something feels like a 'failure', it is ultimately a success in disguise, because from that you grow so much stronger and more knowledgeable. I've cultivated my filmic aesthetic through trial and error, and have now grown more perseverant as a filmmaker because of the setbacks I've faced. It's sort of like how people often cut weak branches off of plants and shrubs to allow them to re-grow stronger.

LPF: I think that's such a beautiful way to view challenges and the process of becoming. You speak so fondly of filming and the crew you worked with. Were there any special or significant moments from the set?

SF: There were so many, but I think the main moments I'll always remember are the ones that felt a tad supernatural. As I mentioned before, the film had strangely come to life, and made parallels with reality. A big motif in this film is an invisible bird, consistently creeping in and taunting Helena, and every time I would be describing a specific moment concerning the bird's presence, something very strange would happen. The craziest instance was during a pre-vis recce with my DOP and stand in. We were sitting in the living room, describing the shot and how Helena first 'sees' the bird, but at the same moment I describe this scene, a robin flies into the exact spot I am pointing towards, where the bird should be. We were all so taken aback. No windows or doors were open, so I have no idea as to how the little guy crept into the house. But I think it was a good omen... I hope.

LPF: Oh wow... it's crazy how otherworldly this whole process has been at times! There's so much that you've personally read into and taken away from the film's themes, but what do you hope the audience takes away from it?

SF: I just hope that the audience, in some capacity, feels the same sense of relatability to the themes as I do. I recently read a quote from Rick Rubin, which encapsulates the overarching goal in all my work, and it's: "When making art, we create a mirror in which someone may see their own hidden reflection". So here's to the audience finding a glimpse – or glint! of themselves...



INT. BEDROOM - MORNING

HELENA(17): in silk pajamas that she's worn to bed since middle school - is sitting up in bed. Someone is sleeping on their side next to her, facing away from Helena.

Sunlight spills through her bedroom windows, one of which is open.

TREES RUSTLE, BIRDS CHIRP.

We pause on Helena's disarmingly

A GLINT in her eye shines with s

Helena looks over her shoulder t
sleeping next to her is ANOTHER
the same pajamas.

Helena A is UNFAZED.

CHIRPING is heard from outside
SEEN.

We cut to a close-up of Helena
interrupting the morning stillne

She is alone in her bed. Not ev
her.

Trying to recenter herself, Hel
a deep breath. A soft breeze co
The room rustles.

She marches over to the window,



HELENA ♡

↳ HAIR UP (MESSY)

↳ PASTIES (OPTIONAL) TOP

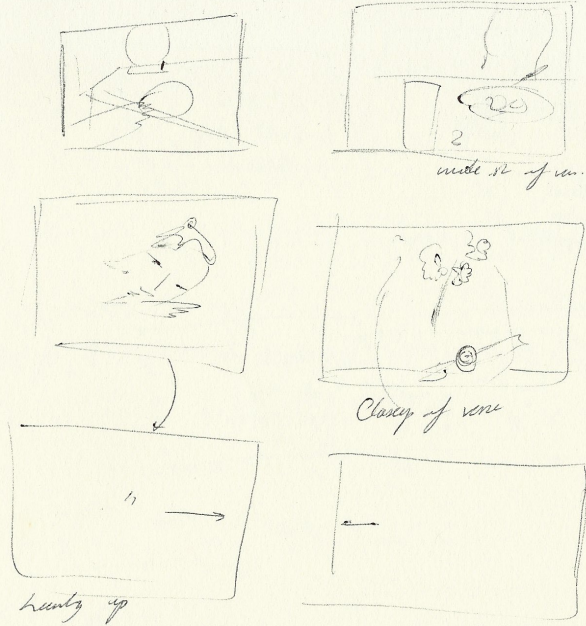
NATURAL
MAKEUP

MATCH CUT TO:

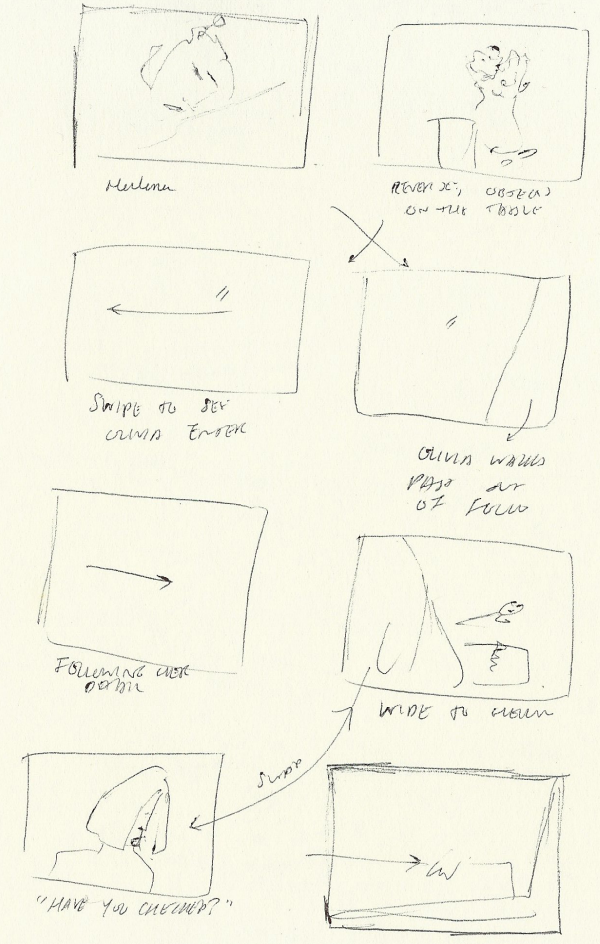


00:02:00

Whenever I had difficulty with fully visualising my shotlist and seeing if it worked sequentially, I would draw it into storyboards, that way I could translate my ideas a little better and see if they flow. The breakfast scene was the most difficult, having invisible elements at play.



(Focus we have a lead up to Helena's voyeuristic eye, she looks, she sees everything in detail.)
Q: how do we lead to the bird in the window, smoothly?







HOLD.





room, looking around, sees olivias wardrobe, in loudspeaker and walks to the wardrobe - d sees a dress, as she begins to put it on the era pans towards the mirror	to the wardrobe, we switch to a side angle of her looking through	STABLE, pan with her towards the wardrobe	Olivias bedroom	int		as she sifts through some outfits, she th them towards the bed as options
SS WERE TOO he being tossed on the bed, keep rolling, ure helena out of focus walking past this clothes being thrown near it too	Closeup, CAM @ 45 ° upper angle.	STABLE	Olivias bedroom	int		
a looking through the wardrobe	Medium closeup, side angle	STABLE	Olivias bedroom	int		
me, looking into mirror, now dressed [action, putting on lipstick and playing with random to olivia bursting into the room, line delivery of olivia	Medium closeup	STABLE, prepare to whip pan to the doorway where Olivia bursts in.	Olivias bedroom			
Helena dialogue	low angle, medium, camera positioned by the bed	handheld, stabl				
andle opening (hinting to olivia coming), the here helena picks stuff up then scrambles	closeup, slow zoom	stable, slow zo				
IS * NONE alogue, helena walks to grab the phone near to leave whilst olivia still rustles through bag, room with olivia slowly following after	Wide, showing both in the shot, cam positioned by the bed					

- 
Sayna Fardaraghi
 Heya Clare! Great to hear about sunday, I reckon we can do it around 7
- 
Sayna Fardaraghi
 Hey Clare! Heres the link for 7:30! xxx Join Zoom Meeting <https://us0>
- 
Sayna Fardaraghi
 Hey Clare, not sure if that links working so try this angel: <https://us0>
- 
Clare McNamara
 to Abigail, Robiul, Murphy, me, Kate ▾
 Thank you for a wonderful rehearsal! So excited to shoot this.





00:04:52

Helena's room was a real bedroom that Kate & I stayed in during the course of our shoot - we felt like we were living in the film, having sleepovers and gossiping every night after wrapping for the day. It really brought life to the bedroom when we came to shoot in it - it felt lived in.



Olivia reaches into her bag.

*(Ready to speak
midway)
"Oh! Don't worry
about that!"*

OLIVIA
Now, Ana, tell me everything. How
are you? How's your mother? Helena
tells me nothing...

*The knock over
a couple pairs of shoes
struggling to
steal the shoes
off.*

As Olivia searches her bag to retrieve her phone, Helena scampers across the hall.

Midway through her bedroom doorway, Helena turns back to her mom, beginning to close the door.

Olivia is still rummaging through her bag trying to find her phone.

HELENA
Okay mom, love you, good night.

*More the
winks
down,*

OLIVIA
Wait...just one picture!

HELENA
Mom...

OLIVIA
Oh, please! You look so grown up! I
couldn't see how well it fit on you
this morning, I mean I completely
forgot I even had it.

*Helena now scampers across
the hall, ready to
her room, she begins
to close the door.*

Sayna,

I don't know if I'll see you before you leave for your film shoot so I just wanted to write a note to send all my best luck and everyone on set.

I've seen you working on this and you

happy



Chateau Marmont
hollywood

Dearest Sayna,

I cannot wait to see you

love,

Sayna,
Thank you so much for opening your home to me for a full ass. month. I don't think I could ever put into words how grateful I am for you.

You are truly such a force of nature. You have been the most fulfilling creative of my life, and watching you on set is so special. You, baby. I love you, and I



00:13:43

I had never directed an action sequence before, and was quite nervous about how it would turn out - but strangely I found it super fun and one of the most successful parts of the film! Directorial cue's with body language, rehearsals and good coverage is key. Kate and her double Kayley were such troopers.











Director	Sayna Fardaraghi
Writer	Julian Stoller
Producer	Robiul Khayer
Production Design	Murphy Mckee Mark Aniel Garcia
Art Assistants	Jay Zhang Aya Wazaz
Cinematography	Jonny Flint
Lighting	Frank Hammond
VFX	Jeremy Le
Costume Design	Abigail Simm
BTS Photography	Sidney Kwok
Graphic Design	Sandy Goldshteyn
Book Design	Anna Dewhurst
Score	Damsel Elysium
Sound Design	Alex Faingold
Helena	Kate Lindsey
Olivia	Clare Mcnamara
Anna	Coco Baudelle
Body Double	Kayley Rainton

Thank you to my parents for supporting my artistic interests.

My film teacher Jason for saying "You'll be a director, right?"
when I didn't believe I would ever get close to that.

Kate, Clare & Coco for bringing life to the screen.

Julian for always inspiring me and challenging new means
of thinking - as well as being my other creative half.

Anna & Sandy for bringing life into the design
of this book exactly the way I envisioned.

And of course, thank you to everyone who has supported my creations & career thus far.

